



*United States Attorney  
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**YONKERS MAN SENTENCED TO 40 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON  
IN SCHEME TO EXPORT ARMS TO THE PHILIPPINES**

MICHAEL GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that FERNANDO SERO, 40, of Yonkers, was sentenced today in White Plains federal court by United States District Judge CHARLES L. BRIEANT to 40 months in prison for shipping U.S. defense articles, including weapons and weapons parts, to the Island of Mindanao in the Southern Philippines in violation of the Arms Export Control Act.

According to court papers, SERO illegally shipped items

- classified as "defense articles" by the U.S. State Department
- to the Philippines on numerous occasions over a three-year period. Four of those shipments were intercepted in September 2003 and March 2005 and contained assault rifles, including A-15s, AK-47s, M-16s, G-3s and HK-94s, along with other weapons parts and ammunition.

SERO purchased the weapons in the United States and then smuggled them to Mindanao in sealed containers by falsifying shipping documents, according to court papers. In some instances, the weapons parts were concealed and commingled within boxes containing household goods such as a light fixture and an electric car cooler. When they arrived in Mindanao, the weapons were reassembled and sold at a substantial profit, according to court papers.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative efforts of the United States Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), and thanked the ICE Attache Office in Manila, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the Philippine National Police for their

cooperation and assistance in the investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney PERRY A. CARBONE is in charge of the prosecution.

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